



## **Accessibility Policy**

### **December 8, 2015**

**CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY STATEMENT:** Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

#### **1. Our mission**

The mission of the Township of Prince is to provide a high quality of life with excellent services for all Prince Township residents, while preserving the integrity of our community's rural lifestyle and natural environment.

#### **2. Our commitment**

To fulfill our mission, the Township of Prince strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers.

#### **3. Providing goods and service to people with disabilities**

The Township of Prince is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

##### **3.1 Communication**

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

##### **3.2 Telephone services**

We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our customers.

We will train staff to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

We will offer to communicate with customers by email, mail, fax or in person (where feasible) if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

### **3.3 Assistive devices**

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.

We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

### **3.4 Billing**

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our customers. For this reason, invoices will be provided in the following formats upon request: for example, hard copy, large print, e-mail in which provider will provide invoices

We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

## **4. Use of service animals and support persons**

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties.

We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter the Township of Prince's premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

Where an admission fee for an event is charged, the support person will not be charged a fee.

## **5. Notice of temporary disruption**

Township of Prince will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises.

## **6. Training for staff**

The Township of Prince will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures.

Individuals in the following positions will be trained:

Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Road Superintendent, Road Labourer, Library CAO, Fire Chief, Best Start Hub Employees.

This training will be provided 3 months after staff commence their duties.

Training will include the following:

- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the Township of Prince's goods and services
- Township of Prince's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard. Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

## **7. Feedback process**

The ultimate goal of the Township of Prince is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way the Township of Prince provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by e-mail, verbally, suggestion box or feedback card.

All feedback will be directed to the CAO/Clerk-Treasurer. Customers can expect to hear back within 10 business days.

## **8. Modifications to this or other policies**

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. Any policy of the Township of Prince that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

## **9. Questions about this policy**

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to, the CAO/Clerk-Treasurer of the Township of Prince.

## **What training must be provided? – A Condensed Summary**

The training could be provided through handouts at an orientation session, individually at a computer, in a classroom setting, or some other format.

Regardless of format, the training must cover the following:

1. Review of the purposes of the AODA and requirements of the customer service standard;
2. Instruction on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
3. Instruction on how to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide dog, other service animal or a support person;
4. Instruction on how to use equipment or devices available at your premises or that you provide otherwise, that may help people with disabilities access your services, such as TTY telephones, elevators, lifts, accessible interactive kiosks or other technology; and
5. Instruction on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing your services.
6. Instruction on your customer service policies, practices and procedures on providing goods and services for people with disabilities.

## **Customer Service Training Resources**

### **Booklet – Training Resources for Small Business and Organizations**

#### **Serve-Ability: Transforming Ontario's Customer Service**

<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/serve-ability/splash.html>

click on Flash

It will take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

#### **Retail Council Accessible Customer Service**

<http://www.redwoodlearning.com/rcc/>

click on Retail Council Accessible Customer Service

It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

#### **Sample Notices on the Feedback Process**

Feedback process on provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.

##### **SAMPLE 1**

Dear client:

We strive to improve accessibility for our clients with disabilities. We would like to hear your comments, questions and suggestions about the provision of our goods or services to people with disabilities.

Please contact the CAO in person, by mail or at 705-779-2992 Ext. 2 or by email at (email) to share your comments.

Thank you.

Prince Township

##### **SAMPLE 2**

Dear Client,

We strive to improve accessibility for our customers with disabilities. We welcome your feedback. Please call 705-779-2992 Ext 2 or email [email address] to share your comments, or request a copy of our accessibility policy.

Thank you.

Prince Township